



# Wildfire Evacuation Centers in Australia

## Home As a Temporary Place

Team **HOME SWEET HOME**

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**Experience Design: Interactions and Environments**

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Course Code: 2270033

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# Introduction

The world is becoming increasingly volatile with a **myriad of crises** happening all around the globe. Both man-made and natural catastrophes are destroying lives and livelihoods in these **desperate situations**. Many of these events give rise to **large displaced populations** who must relocate to temporary homes that are **considered less desirable**. To improve this upsetting situation, it is critical to **examine the occupants' perception** of such places and to **explore its transformative potential**.

This project is part of the Experience Design course 2022 in Tongji University, Shanghai, taught by Professor Kaja Tooming Buchanan. In the project, we focus on the evacuation centers due to the wildfires disasters in Australia.





# Design Challenge (by Kaja Tooming Buchanan)

How can people **maintain** their everyday life with **dignity** and create **meaningful experiences** in places like shelters that are their “temporary homes” for a certain period of time, where the **transformative process** of becoming to be something else has challenged the whole idea of being home.

Maintain their everyday life with dignity and create meaningful experiences.

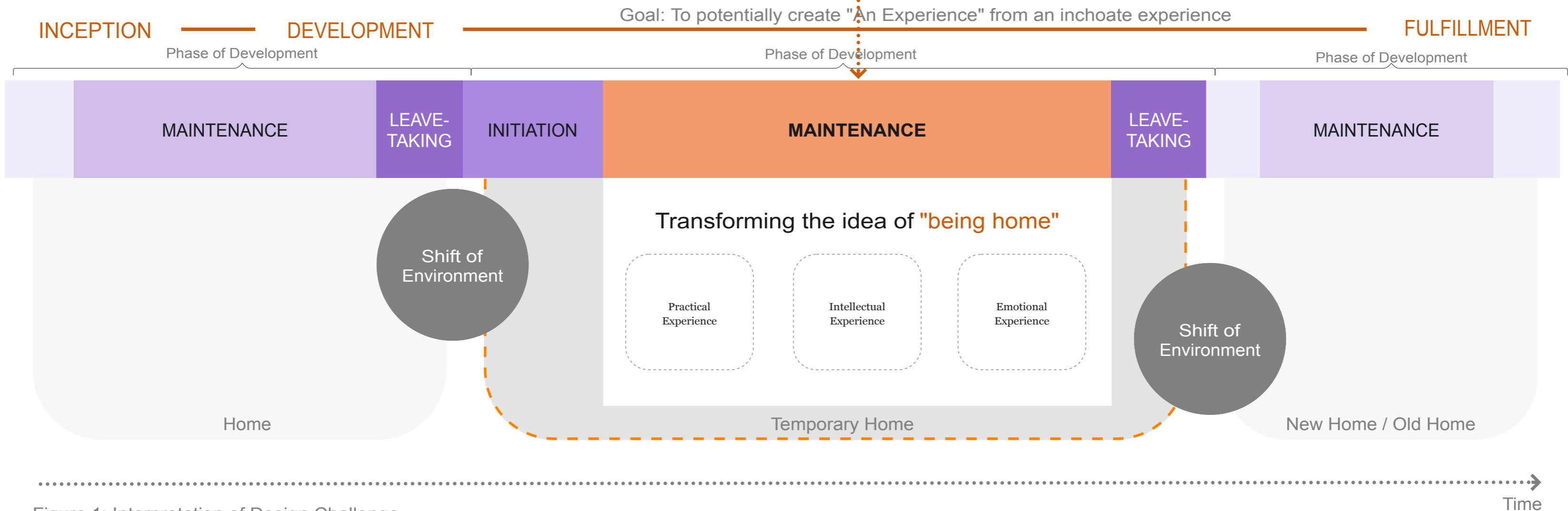


Figure 1: Interpretation of Design Challenge

Time



# Methods

**Concept Mapping**

**Brainstorming**

**imaginative variation**

**Secondary research**  
(News, articles, ...)

Definition: Home & Temporary Home

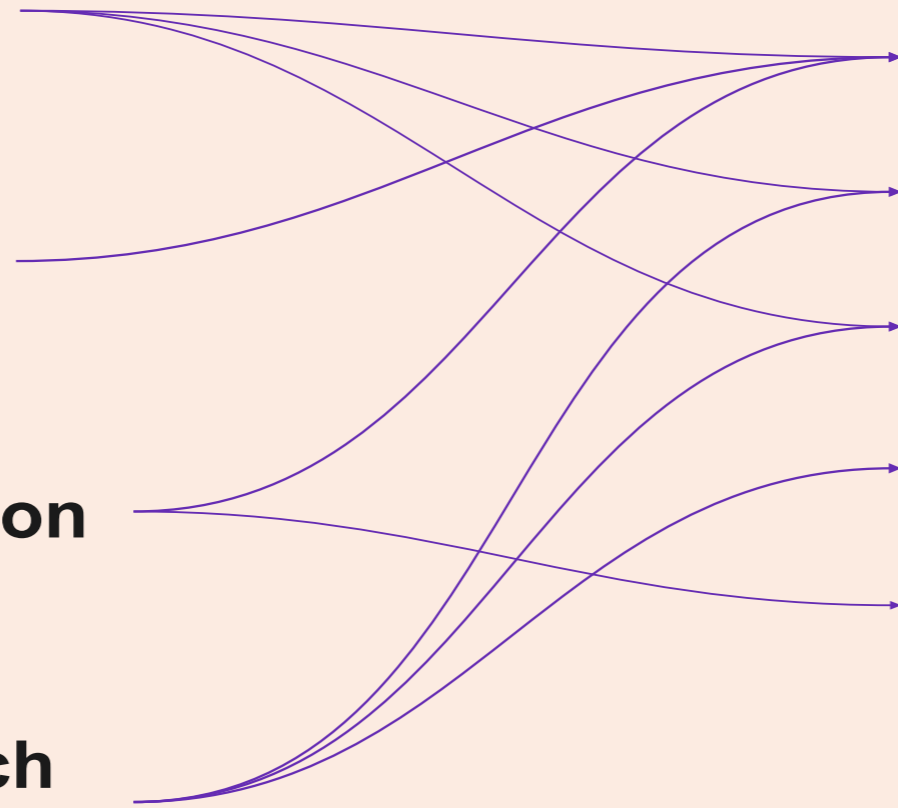
Theoretical Framework

Strategic Framework

User Profiles

Evidence & Issues

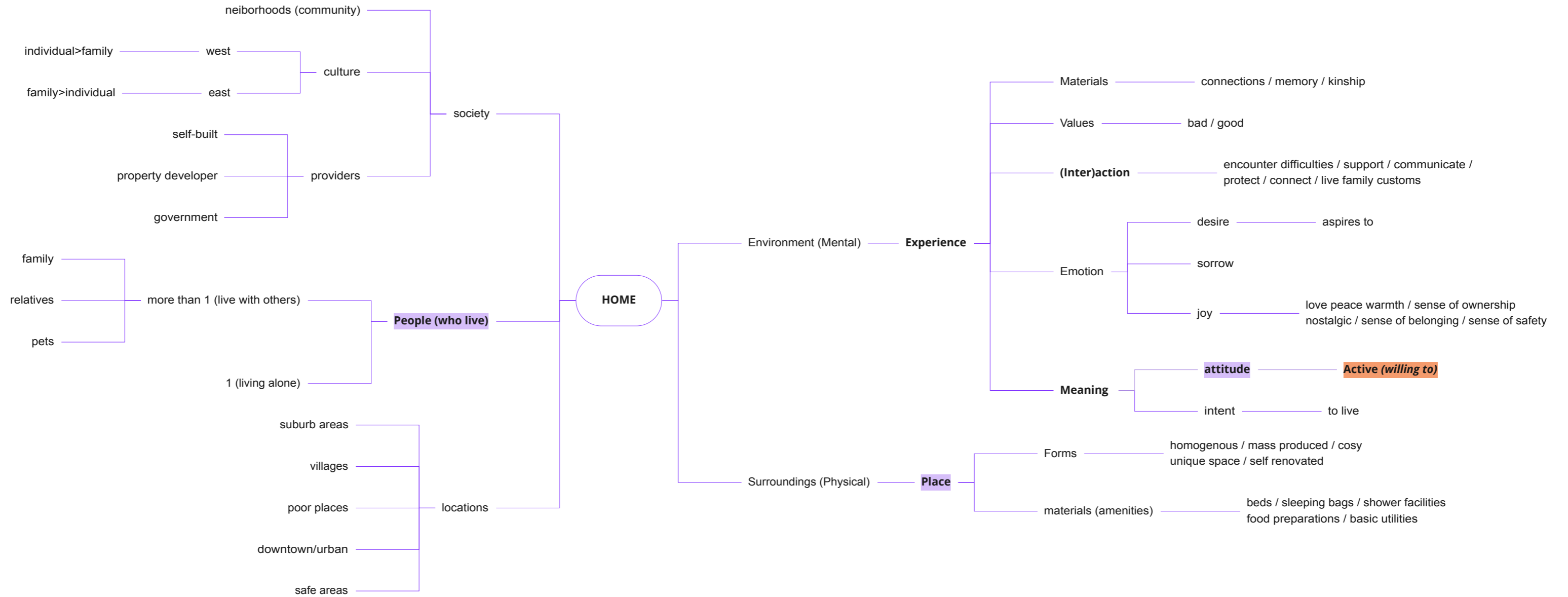
Problem Statement





# Interpretation Map

# Home

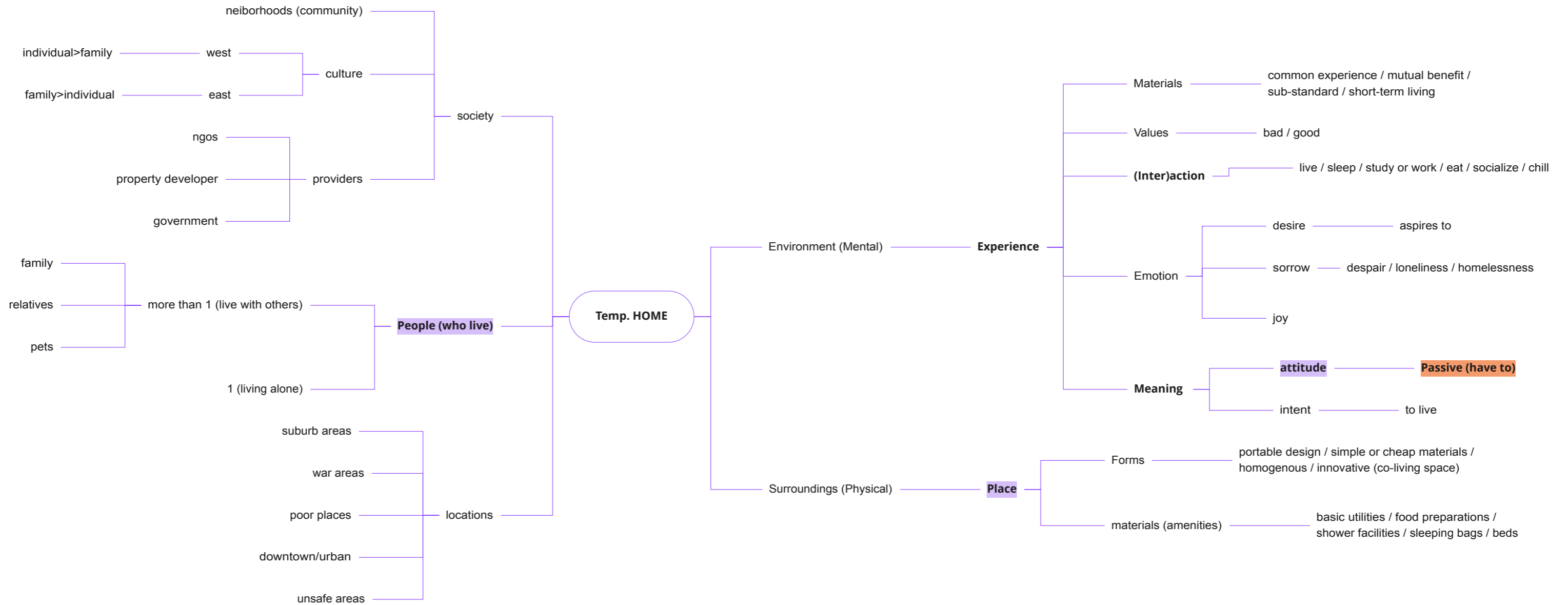




# Interpretation Map

# Temporary Home

EXPERIENCE DESIGN 2022



EXPERIENCE DESIGN 2022

# Definition

Defining Method

**Imaginative variation  
(phenomenology)**

## HOME

A **Place** where **people live with an active attitude\***, usually associated with positive emotions and has enough living facilities.

*\* which means people are **willing to live in the place***

## TEMPORARY HOME

A **Place** where **people live with a passive attitude\***, usually associated with negative emotions and provides limited living facilities.

*\* which means people are **have to live in the place***

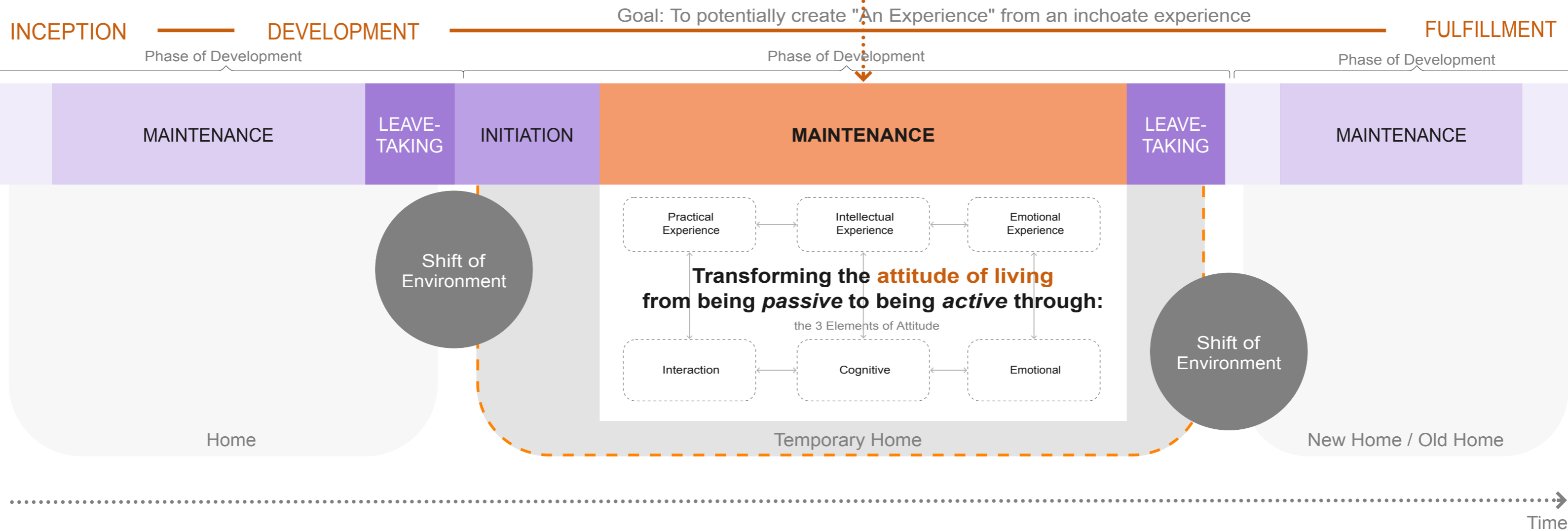
\*Inspired by definition of "home" by Oxford Languages, which define home as "the place where one lives permanently, especially as a member of a family or household."



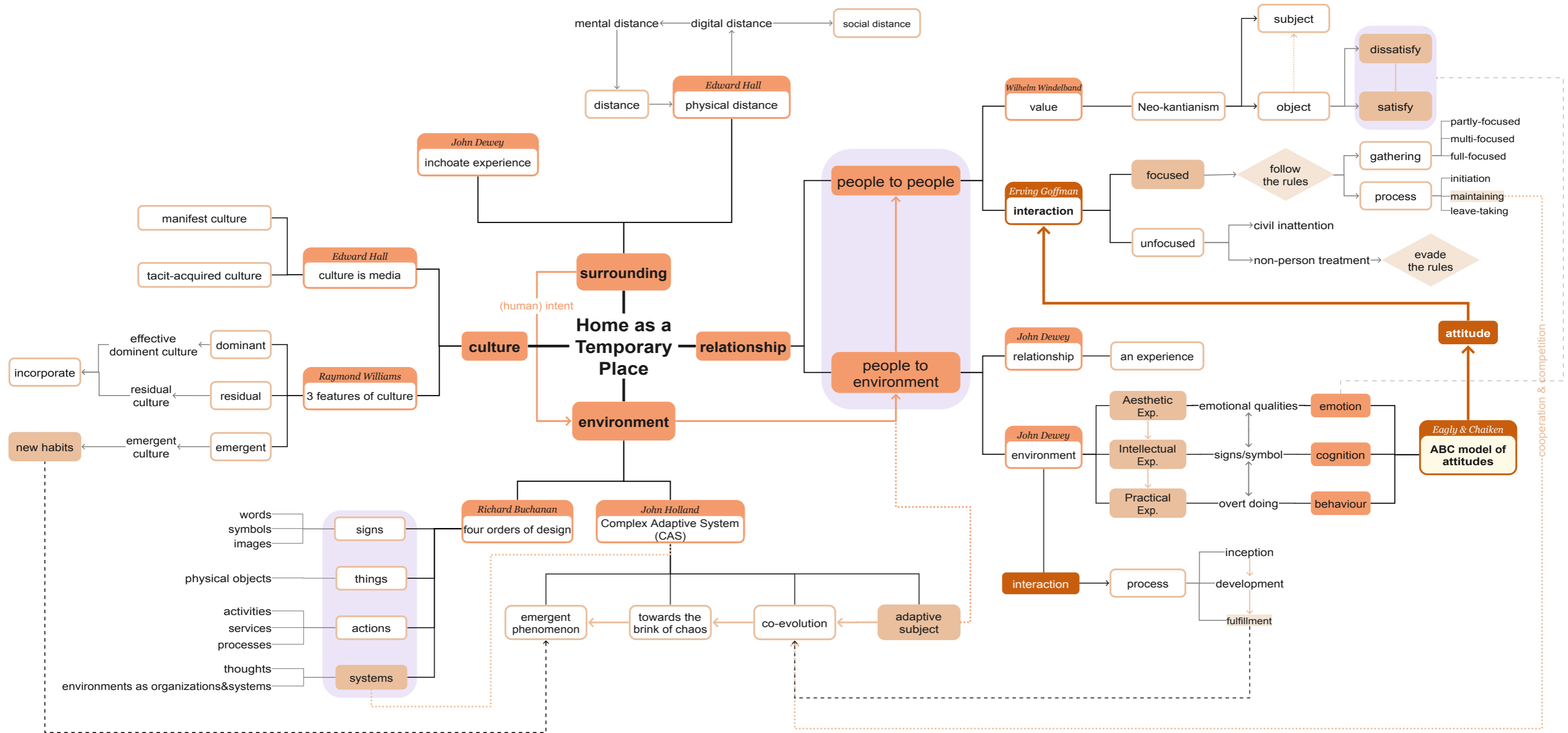
# General Purpose

To explore how to transform **the attitude of living** from a passive one to an active one for occupants in Australian bushfires evacuation centers, through **identifying the maintenance approaches** that might potentially transform **the cognitive, emotional and interactional components** of the evacuees' attitude towards their "temporary home".

Identifying maintenance approaches that transform a passive stay to an active one.



# Theoretical Framework





# Strategic Framework

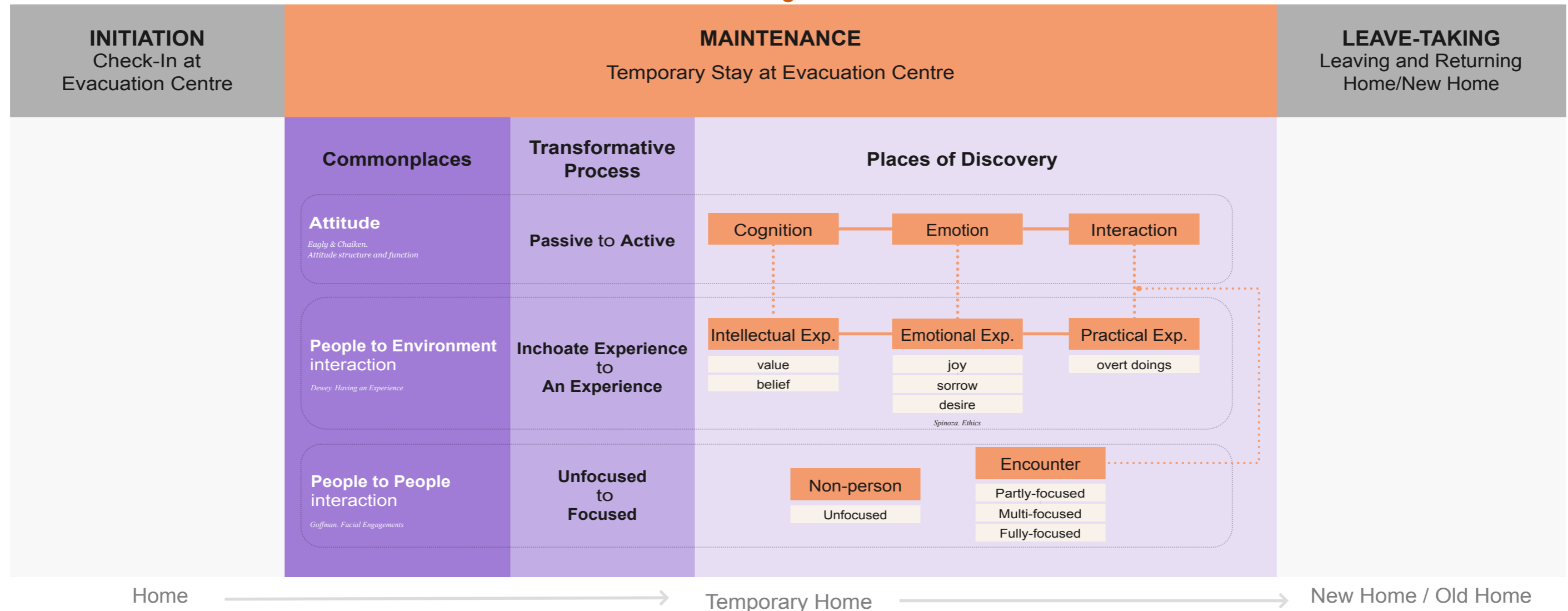
Identifying maintenance approaches that transform a passive stay to an active one.

Goal: To potentially create "An Experience" from an inchoate experience

INCEPTION

DEVELOPMENT

FULFILLMENT



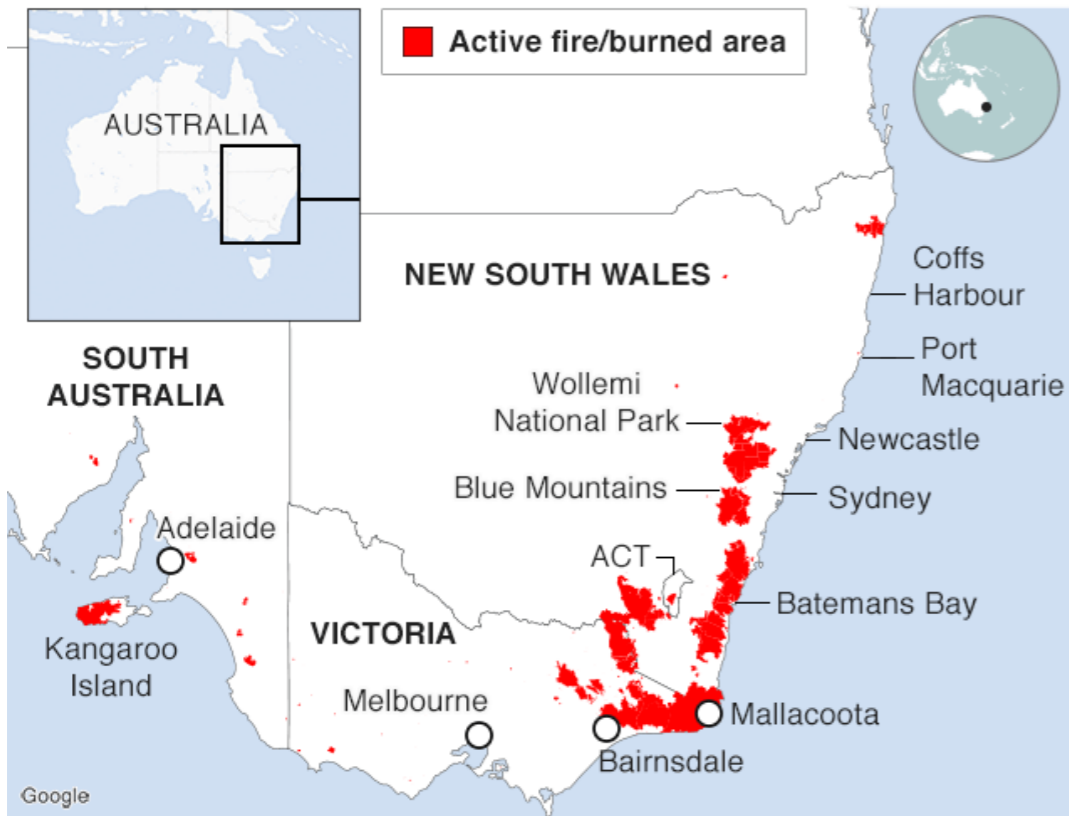
# Contexts - Bushfires and Evacuation Center

## Australian Bushfire

Widespread and regular occurrence which shaped the ecosystem of the continent. The fires cause loss of life and property damage. It usually happens during seasons with high temperature, low humidity and strong wind.

The states of New South Wales and Victoria are the worst hit areas.

### Major bushfires in Australia



Source: NSW Rural Fire Service / Victoria Country Fire Authority, 31 Jan



## Australian Bushfire Evacuation Centers

The displacement triggered by the bushfires has destabilised the lives of many of those forced to leave their homes, not only affecting their housing conditions but also disrupting their livelihoods, access to education, security and health.

Evacuation and Relief centers initiated by charity organisations were usually established to provide people with basic needs.

State government agencies also set up services to provide emergency accommodation for those displaced. Furthermore, community-based help programmes are also in place for further help.

	ACT	NSW	NT	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA
Evacuation centre	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Relief centre					✓		✓	
Neighbourhood Safer Place		✓		✓			✓	
Nearby Safer Place						✓		
Safer Place								✓
Place of Refuge				✓				
Community Fire Refuge							✓	
Emergency or cyclone shelter			✓	Limited to public cyclone shelters				
Bushfire Safer Place					✓			
Bushfire Last Resort Refuge					✓			

<https://naturaldisaster.royalcommission.gov.au/publications/html-report/chapter-12>



# Role of Evacuation Shelter

In an evacuation, the primary and secondary needs of affected people include:

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## Primary needs

---

Safety of people and property

---

Shelter

---

Food and clothing

---

Adequate rest and sleep

---

General physical and emotional wellbeing

---

## Secondary needs

---

Maintenance of dignity

---

A sense of control over one's destiny and a sense of order and belonging

---

Privacy

---

Access to accurate and timely information

---

Attending to urgent personal practical matters

---

# User Profile - Users

## Breakdown of different people in an Evacuation Center



### Evacuees:

people who are temporarily displaced as a result of a threatening or real hazard.

### Self sheltering:

people who source their own shelter solutions outside of the designated shelters in response to a threatening or real hazard.

### Centre residents:

people accessing an evacuation centre for basic needs and services. They will usually be registered, have completed an intake form and be sleeping on site.

### Centre day guests:

people temporarily accessing an evacuation centre for basic needs and services, such as meals and information. They may be registered but are not sleeping on site.

### Centre visitors:

unaffected persons who may be temporarily providing support services such as financial or mental health support or viewing the operations of the centre (e.g. media and VIPs).

# Primary User Profile

## Centre Residents - Adults

People accessing an evacuation centre for basic needs and services. They will usually be registered, have completed an intake form and be sleeping on site.

*Queensland Evacuation Handbook 2017, Australian Red Cross*

**Age:** Adults (Over 18, 80%)

**Gender:** Male(45%) /Female(52%)

**Location:** Wildfire vacuaction centers in New South Wales of Australia

**Situation:** During Wild Fire

**Condition:** Living in an evacuation centre

### Needs:

- basic needs and services
- Housing
- Work

### Different needs of men and women

- Women are more likely than men to evacuate early in time than their counterpart when evacuating ahead of a bushfire.
- Women were more likely to attribute their evacuation decision to the government's advice to evacuate, while men are more likely to say it was their own decision



Demographic information from: THE 2019-2020 AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES: FROM TEMPORARY EVACUATION TO LONGER-TERM DISPLACEMENT. Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org)

Photo from: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/nov/12/encircled-flames-sleepy-nsw-towns-bushfire-crisis>



# Secondary User Profile

## Centre Residents - Children

People accessing an evacuation centre for basic needs and services. They will usually be registered, have completed an intake form and be sleeping on site.

*Queensland Evacuation Handbook 2017, Australian Red Cross*

**Age:** Under 18

**Gender:** Male/Female

**Location:** Wildfire vacuation centers in Australia

**Situation:** During Wild Fire

**Condition:** Working in an evacuation centre

**Needs:** Specific requirements in terms of

- play areas
- adequate beds in shelters
- physical and mental healthcare.
- schooling



Demographic information from: THE 2019-2020 AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES: FROM TEMPORARY EVACUATION TO LONGER-TERM DISPLACEMENT. Internal Displacement Monitoring Center. [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org)  
Photo from: <https://www.redcross.org.au/stories/emergencies/in-an-evacuation-centre/>

# Tertiary User Profile

## Volunteers

People who work for evacuation center and provide services and comfort for the residents and day guests.

*Queensland Evacuation Handbook 2017, Australian Red Cross*

**Age:** All  
**Gender:** Male/Female  
**Location:** Wildfire vacuaction centers in Australia

**Situation:** During Wild Fire  
**Condition:** Working in an evacuation centre

**Needs:** Conducive working environment



<https://www.redcross.org.au/stories/emergencies/in-an-evacuation-centre/>



# Interaction - people to people

## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate people to people interactions (especially occupants to occupants or occupants to volunteers) in an evacuation center which influence their attitudes towards the place.

**Sources of Evidence in Australia** For representational purposes only

**about regional**  
Tathra Bushfire Evacuation Centre closes a new chapter of generosity  
"You can't all here and do nothing, you are out there to help people," Lyn says. The trio estimate at least 4,000 sandwiches have been made.  
"The community supports us all year round and if we can pay that back a little bit that's what we should be doing," he says. Almost 900 people registered at the Evacuation Centre. It was a rollercoaster of every emotion. **supported by people with golden hearts** - people who will be forever remembered for their contribution.

**the guardian**  
Encircled by flames: the sleepy New South Wales towns in the bushfire crisis  
As the fire edged closer to them, **volunteers organised the evacuation centre** with the bowling club and almost immediately people began trickling in. Heriot, her partner Rodney and their dog were among the **80-odd people, dogs, birds, cats and goldfish crowded into the ambleroom** of the Tuncurry bowling club on Tuesday night. "We're a bit of a menagerie at the moment and it looks a bit like Noah's ark out the back," the manager, Terry Green, told Guardian Australia earlier in the day.

**VOA**  
Report Outlines Racism Toward Aboriginal Australians During Worst Bushfires on Record  
Indigenous Australians experienced **racism and unfair treatment** during the catastrophic "Black Summer" bushfires, according to new research. It has found that First Nations communities suffered more than other groups because of failures by the authorities during the crisis.  
"Aboriginal people did go to the evacuation centers only to be turned away because the staff there said 'we've helped enough of your people today, we've helped enough of your community members,'" Williamson said. "When you speak to people who are directly affected and you ask them why is that these things are happening to you, all of them connect it to historical racism and colonization. The most damaging instance that happens for people who have lived through these disasters and are still recovering is feeling like they have been forgotten."

**theguardian**  
Over two-thirds of respondents who evacuated stayed with family or friends (69 per cent), and smaller proportions stayed at an evacuation shelter (five per cent), hotel/guest house (four per cent) or campground/campsite (three per cent). Those who stayed elsewhere (18 per cent) mentioned staying in cars/utes, with neighbours, and at schools or workplaces. **some reporting they stayed in cars because evacuation shelters wouldn't accept pets**.  
When asked about how owning pets influenced evacuation, significant proportions of the sample strongly agreed or agreed that having pets influenced where they went after evacuation (81 per cent), their decision about whether to evacuate (72 per cent), increased the stress of evacuation (68 per cent), and the mode of transport they used (66 per cent). In addition, having pets influenced the number of trips made to and from home during evacuation (54 per cent) and slowed down the speed of evacuation (43 per cent).

**ABC NEWS**  
No-pet evacuation rules 'putting lives at risk'  
Pet ownerships influence one's evacuation options  
"But, ironically, in not allowing pets into evacuation centres, people's lives are being put at risk. We simply have to include pets in evacuation procedures."  
Dr Sekkel says the natural disasters over the past month in Queensland have provided many examples of people refusing to leave their homes when told to evacuate because they could not take their pets with them.

**Sources of Evidence in Other Places** For representational purposes only

**CPR News**  
PHOTOS: At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures  
Many being served at the evacuation center said volunteers were **extremely helpful, kind and resourceful** there.

**MailOnline**  
Club acting as an evacuation centre in town decimated by bushfires REFUSES to let dog owners inside - because 'it's where they serve food'  
Club acting as an evacuation centre in town decimated by bushfires refuses to let dog owners inside - because 'it's where they serve food', Club Old Bar, about 16 kilometres east of Taree on the Mid North Coast, is hosting evacuees as bushfires ravage the state. But pet owners staying at the club on Saturday were told they are not allowed inside the venue with their dogs.

**The Press Democrat**  
Public shelter space limited for Sonoma County wildfire evacuees during pandemic  
The few people inside the fairgrounds building were **assigned a 100-square-foot space to maintain social distancing**. Packaged snacks were sanitized, and meals would be brought directly to their space, rather than the typical chow line. **Masks were required at all times**.  
But pet owners staying at the club on Saturday were told they are not allowed inside the venue with their dogs.

**New Times**  
Cal Fire and Red Cross rethink evacuation centers, base camps as fire season collides with COVID-19  
"Where we've made our changes is at base camp, where everybody comes to have a meal, have briefings, make plans, and pick up supplies," he said. "All these areas are now restricted in how many people can come in. There's hand sanitizing, masks, and 6-foot distancing."  
The new rules mean **more lightly attended daily incident briefings and shorter, less social meal times**.  
"There's 6-foot distancing sitting at the meal tables. They can't just sit next to their buddies," Orsico explained. "There's no longer any sitting around and chatting after you're done eating. You have to finish eating and quickly leave so that section can be sanitized for the next person."

Interpretation

When faced with challenges and crises, people in the community come together to help the needy through volunteering or donation.

The crises posed challenges to people who have to deal with animals. When human are threatened in life, it takes great responsibility to also care for the intimate relationship established between us and animals.

While pre-existing discrimination are still prominent, there are also new forms of unfair treatment acted upon the evacuees.

Social Distancing concerns are affecting how people perceive interaction with others. In most cases, it undermines the expected level of communication that we are used to pre-pandemic.

Analysis

# Cognition

## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate the evacuees' cognitions in an evacuation center which constitute their attitudes towards evacuation centers.

**Sources of Evidence in Australia** For representational purposes only

**about regional**  
Tathra Bushfire Evacuation Centre closes a new chapter of generosity  
"People have turned up from Canberra and Sydney with boot loads of groceries ... - **unbelievable**," Lisa says. "What a wonderful **community spirit**, we have met so many wonderful people," Denise says.

**VOA**  
"It's Like Prison": What Life Looks Like Inside An Evacuation Centre  
"It was like prison," said Danny, a Murwillumbah resident. "It was a community-style, 'all walks of life' kind of prison setup with no security."

While most people had a pre-existing mental image of the evacuation centers from media, the feeling when one is physically in one can be very different. This shows that the cognitive understanding of a place is easily changeable when one feels it physically.

Some evacuees adopt a more positive outlook by seeking an alternative perspective in such desperate situations. To feel reconciled or just simply accept the situation seems to be the helpful attitude that generally maintain the mental wellbeing of the evacuees. However, this approach is unlikely to be found in younger people.

Evacuees at the centers are aware of the amount of help they received from the community and showed their appreciation too. The grateful feeling in people might potentially spur people to be more resilient and positive in the evacuation center stay.

Interpretation

Analysis

**Conclusion**

Most people have **negative beliefs** about an evacuation center, which even being described as "like prison". However, The **human cognition of a place can be overwritten** by their physical presence in a place, events that take place in an environment and the mental resilience one has. While cognition influences human attitude, its **fluctuating nature** allows for **transformative interventions** to reshape human perception.

Conclusion

**Conclusion**

While it is evident that the **sense of community** helped those in need to get through the crisis, there are many **challenges** faced by the evacuees during their interactions with others. Such problems include **unfair treatment, social distancing from others** and the difficult situation with animal handlings. The positive and negative interactions the evacuees have **offset each other** and eventually lead to a **dull and unpassionate attitude** towards an evacuation centre stay.

Conclusion

# Evidence Mapping

**Conclusion**

Most evacuees experience **fear and anxiety** because of uncertainty about property safety and future accommodation during their stay. While this is understandable from a disaster point of view, it **affects human reactions and actions irrationally**, in terms of evacuation, returning and future-planning decisions and attitudes.

Conclusion

Feeling desperate and helpless is common in evacuees. While some people breakdown in such situations, others **stay resilient** and try to move forward. The different approach towards moving on are due to the innate human nature of resilience.

Similar with other disastrous situation, the most common feelings in such situation are **fearfulness, anxiety and uncertainty**. Such emotions might have been heightened because of the **makeshift surrounding** that one lives in.

Even when faced with dangerous situation as such, many are still reluctant to step out of their comfort zone due to **fear and the feeling of uncertainty**. While this sounds like an irrational reaction, it shows how much negative emotions can have an impact of **human's decision making**.

Analysis

Interpretation

**Sources of Evidence in Australia** For representational purposes only

**the guardian**  
Encircled by flames: the sleepy New South Wales towns in the bushfire crisis  
As the fire edged closer to them, volunteers organised the evacuation center with the bowling club and almost immediately people began trickling in. Heriot, her partner Rodney and their dog were among the **80-odd people, dogs, birds, cats and goldfish crowded into the ambleroom** of the Tuncurry bowling club on Tuesday night. "We're a bit of a menagerie at the moment and it looks a bit like **Noah's ark out the back**," the manager, Terry Green, told Guardian Australia earlier in the day.

**VOA**  
"It's Like Prison": What Life Looks Like Inside An Evacuation Centre  
"It was like prison," said Danny, a Murwillumbah resident. "It was a community-style, 'all walks of life' kind of prison setup with no security. Which felt highly volatile, because a lot of the rough sleepers we have in town, would be out by the entry, and it was just a chaotic melting pot. You'd be talking, and they'd have dingos, they'd have pitbulls, all kinds of stuff right there at the front door, ready to kick off at any moment."

Due to the limited resources in short notices, the facilities provided to evacuees are often insufficient. This led to **lower living quality** perceived by the occupants.

The influx of human and pets into the evacuation centers led to **chaotic and cramped spatial situations**.

Due to both limited quantity of food and sanitation issues, some suffered from **diseases/illnesses** that arise due to their exposure to such risks.

Due to the lack of sanitation, food safety also became an area of concern in evacuation centers.

Interpretation

Analysis

**Sources of Evidence in Other Places** For representational purposes only

**CPR News**  
PHOTOS: At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures  
Siblings George and Cathy Zheng, 8 and 10, play on their cot at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Their family's home is Superior is safe. "There is no enough bed in the center, so my parents and I have to sleep on the floor," said Cathy.  
Eliase Garden, left, and his aunt Ro Rianoshek transport space heaters from Xcel Energy for those affected by the Marshall fire at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Power outages and water boiling advisories are affecting much of the area.

**unicef**  
Child evacuees face unseen threats after Typhoon Odette  
Monilyn is not sure if Ranel is moderate or severely malnourished. She also fears that **his health might have declined during his stay in the evacuation center**.  
Cases of acute gastroenteritis have been reported in three villages in Caglaniao and in five of the seven municipalities of Dinagat Islands. The provincial disaster risk reduction and management office **reported 123 cases of gastroenteritis and expects outbreaks** in the coming days due to **poor access to clean drinking water**.

# Interaction - people to environment

## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate people to environment interactions in an evacuation center which influence their attitudes towards the place.

# Emotion

## Goal of Investigation:

To identify characteristics about the residents' emotions in an evacuation center which influence their attitudes towards evacuation centers.

**Sources of Evidence in Australia** For representational purposes only

**AFPO**  
Shock, fear and sadness grip Australia's 'bushfire refugees'  
For many, the horror is **reminiscent with war-torn refugees** about whether they still to go - about when all this will end. Many are feeling this moment while dealing with the trauma of what they have lived through. Thousands of Australians forced from their homes by rampaging bushfires now find themselves **stuck in makeshift shelters** for the future and beyond refugees in their own country.

**EMA**  
Australian Emergency Manual Disaster Recovery  
The effects of disaster are very real. Strong feelings may arise when the disaster experience is recalled about. Increased worry may interfere with day-to-day living and **the experience may leave people affected by it** **unable to relax and worried about the future**. Getting back to normal can be difficult after an experience of this kind. Researcher maintain that disaster will not be the same, however, details below are some of the common feelings.

**Sources of Evidence in Other Places** For representational purposes only

**the guardian**  
Fire evacuees steer clear of shelters, seek isolation during pandemic  
"This is unprecedented," Adria said. "People are afraid, people never want to leave their homes, but people need to take this seriously. We're in the presence of saving lives. Don't be afraid of the support that's out there for you."

**CPR News**  
PHOTOS: At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures  
Sharon, who performed to go for her first name, made us her cot at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. The woman alone her cat, Mason, who ran off after they were evacuated, and about her and her partner's home. "I'd like to know how long we're going to have to stay here for a while?"  
Forest Smith of Louisville rents while moving spots in search of a quiet area at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Smith thinks his home of 20 years. "I'm not sure if I'm going to be able to return to my home."  
Sarah Hartley of Fort Collins makes her bed at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Hartley, who used to live in the area and had parked her car nearby before going out of town for the holidays, rushed enough to the shelter after landing at the airport back in Colorado. "I'd love to go back to my home."  
Monilyn Manton watches some fall from the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Manton, who lives in a retirement community, panicked and rushed out of her home without grabbing much. "It's scary, you know. There's one thing that we can't have no control over and that's fire. Man and wife are covered everything, but fire, it's scary."

## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate people to environment interactions in an evacuation center which influence their attitudes towards the place.

# Evidence of Issues

Interaction - people to environment

### Sources of Evidence in Australia

For representational purposes only

#### theguardian

##### Encircled by flames: the sleepy New South Wales towns in the bushfire crisis

As the fire edged closer to them, volunteers organised the evacuation centre with the bowling club and almost immediately people began trickling in. Heriot, her partner Rodney and their dog were among the 80-odd people, dogs, birds, cats and goldfish crowded into the auditorium of the Tuncurry bowling club on Tuesday night. "We're a bit of a menagerie at the moment and it looks a bit like Noah's ark out the back," the manager, Terry Green, told Guardian Australia earlier in the day.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/nov/12/encircled-flames-sleepy-nsw-towns-bushfire-crisis>



##### 'It's Like Prison': What Life Looks Like Inside An Evacuation Centre

"It was like prison," said Danny, a Murwillumbah resident, "It was a community-style, 'all walks of life' kind of prison setup with no security. Which felt highly volatile, because a lot of the rough sleepers we have in town, would be sat by the entry, and it was just a chaotic melting pot. You'd be talking, and they'd have dingos, they'd have pitbulls, all kinds of stuff right there at the front door, ready to kick off at any moment."

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/epx8q7/flood-victims-say-life-inside-an-evacuation-centre-is-like-prison>

### Sources of Evidence in Other Places

For representational purposes only

#### CPR News

##### PHOTOS: At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures

Siblings George and Cathy Zheng, 8 and 10, play on their cot at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Their family's home is Superior is safe. "There is no enough bed in the center, so my parents and I have to sleep on the floor," said Cathy.

Eloise Carden, left, and his aunt Ro Rianoshek transport space heaters from Xcel Energy for those affected by the Marshall fire at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Power outages and water boiling advisories are affecting much of the area.

<https://www.cpr.org/2022/01/01/photos-at-a-lafayette-shelter-anxious-marshall-fire-evacuees-worry-and-await-word-on-their-homes-and-futures/>



##### Child evacuees face unseen threats after Typhoon Odette

Monilyn is not sure if Randel is moderate or severely malnourished. She also fears that his health might have declined during his stay in the evacuation centre.

... Cases of acute gastroenteritis have been reported in three villages in Cagdianao and in five of the seven municipalities of Dinagat Islands. The provincial disaster risk reduction and management office reported 123 cases of gastroenteritis and expects outbreaks in the coming days due to poor access to clean drinking water.

<https://www.unicef.org/philippines/stories/child-evacuees-face-unseen-threats-after-typhoon-odette>

Due to the **limited resources** in short notices, the facilities provided to evacuees are often insufficient. This led to **lower living quality perceived by the occupants.**

The influx of human and pets into the evacuation centers led to **chaotic and cramped spatial situations.**

Due to the **lack of sanitation, food safety** also became an area of concern in evacuation centers.

Due to both **limited quantity of food and sanitation issues**, some suffered from **diseases/illnesses** that arise due to their exposure to such risks.

## Conclusion

The evacuees **lack personal space**, food, water resources, and the access to clean water, all these potentially lead to health issues. As such, **these conditions undermine the attitude** one holds during the maintenance stage of their evacuation center temporary stay.

Interpretation

Analysis

Conclusion



## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate people to people interactions (especially occupants to occupants or occupants to volunteers) in an evacuation center which influence their attitudes towards the place.

# Evidence of Issues

## Interaction - people to people

### Sources of Evidence in Australia For representational purposes only

about regional

#### Tathra Bushfire Evacuation Centre closes a new chapter of generosity

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-24/tathra-bushfire-evacuation-centre-closes-a-new-chapter-of-generosity/5824244>

"You can't sit here and do nothing, you are out there to help people," Lyn says. The trio estimate at least 4,000 sandwiches have been made. Ian Ritchie from Za's Mobile Coffee has made at least 900 free cups of coffee. "The community supports us all year round and if we can pay that back a little bit that's what we should be doing," he says. Almost 900 people registered at the Evacuation Centre, it was a rollercoaster of every emotion, supported by people with golden hearts - people who will be forever remembered for their contribution.

theguardian

#### Encircled by flames: the sleepy New South Wales towns in the bushfire crisis

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jan/24/evacuation-centre-nsw-bushfire-crisis>

As the fire edged closer to them, volunteers organised the evacuation centre with the bowling club and almost immediately people began trickling in. Heriot, her partner Rodney and their dog were among the 80-odd people, dogs, birds, cats and goldfish crowded into the auditorium of the Tuncurry bowling club on Tuesday night. "We're a bit of a menagerie at the moment and it looks a bit like Noah's ark out the back," the manager, Terry Green, told Guardian Australia earlier in the day.

VOA

#### Report Outlines Racism Toward Aboriginal Australians During Worst Bushfires on Record

<https://www.voanews.com/a/australia-bushfires-racism-aboriginal-people/5612444.html>

Indigenous Australians experienced racism and unfair treatment during the catastrophic "Black Summer" bushfires, according to new research. It has found that First Nations communities suffered more than other groups because of failures by the authorities during the crisis.

"Aboriginal people did go to the evacuation centers only to be turned away because the staff there said we've helped enough of your people today; we've helped enough of your community members," Williamson said. "When you speak to people who are directly affected and you ask them why is that these things are happening to you, all of them connect it to historical racism and colonization. The most damaging instance that happens for people who have lived through these disasters and are still recovering is feeling like they have been forgotten."

Australian Government National Recovery and Resilience Agency Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience

#### The preparedness and evacuation behaviour of pet owners in emergencies and natural disasters

<https://www.aifdr.gov.au/research-and-publications/2020/04/the-preparedness-and-evacuation-behaviour-of-pet-owners-in-emergencies-and-natural-disasters>

Over two-thirds of respondents who evacuated stayed with family or friends (69 per cent), and smaller proportions stayed at an evacuation shelter (five per cent), hotel/guest house (four per cent) or showground/campsite (three per cent). Those who stayed elsewhere (18 per cent) mentioned staying in cars/utes, with neighbours, and at schools or workplaces; some reporting they stayed in cars because evacuation shelters wouldn't accept pets. When asked about how owning pets influenced evacuation, significant proportions of the sample strongly agreed or agreed that having pets influenced where they went after evacuation (81 per cent), their decision about whether to evacuate (72 per cent), increased the stress of evacuation (68 per cent), and the mode of transport they used (66 per cent). In addition, having pets influenced the number of trips made to and from home during evacuation (54 per cent) and slowed down the speed of evacuation (43 per cent).

NEWS

#### No-pet evacuation rules 'putting lives at risk'

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-24/no-pet-evacuation-rules-putting-lives-at-risk/5824244>

Pet ownerships influence one's evacuation options

"But, ironically, in not allowing pets into evacuation centres, people's lives are being put at risk. We simply have to include pets in evacuation procedures."

Dr Seksel says the natural disasters over the past month in Queensland have provided many examples of people refusing to leave their homes when told to evacuate because they could not take their pets with them.

### Sources of Evidence in Other Places For representational purposes only

CPR News

#### PHOTOS: At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures

<https://www.cprnews.com/story/news/2020/01/24/lafayette-shelter-anxious-marshall-fire-evacuees-worry-and-await-word-on-their-homes-and-futures/5824244>

Many being served at the evacuation center said volunteers were extremely helpful, kind and resourceful there.



MailOnline

#### Club acting as an evacuation centre in town decimated by bushfires REFUSES to let dog owners inside - because 'it's where they serve food'

<https://www.dailymail.com/news/uk-home-affairs/article-7837323/Club-acting-as-an-evacuation-centre-in-town-decimated-by-bushfires-refuses-to-let-dog-owners-inside-because-it-s-where-they-serve-food.html>

Club acting as an evacuation centre in town decimated by bushfires refuses to let dog owners inside - because 'it's where they serve food'. Club Old Bar, about 16 kilometres east of Taree on the Mid North Coast, is hosting evacuees as bushfires ravage the state. But pet owners staying at the club on Saturday were told they are not allowed inside the venue with their dogs.

The Press Democrat

#### Public shelter space limited for Sonoma County wildfire evacuees during pandemic

<https://www.pressdemocrat.com/story/news/2020/01/24/sonoma-county-wildfire-evacuees-during-pandemic/5824244>

The few people inside the fairgrounds building were assigned a 100-square-foot space to maintain social distancing. Packaged snacks were sanitized, and meals would be brought directly to their space, rather than the typical chow line. Masks were required at all times.

New Times

#### Cal Fire and Red Cross rethink evacuation centers, base camps as fire season collides with COVID-19

<https://www.newtimes.com/story/news/2020/01/24/cal-fire-and-red-cross-rethink-evacuation-centers-base-camps-as-fire-season-collides-with-covid-19/5824244>

"Where we've made our changes is at base camp, where everybody comes to have a meal, have briefings, make plans, and pick up supplies," he said. "All these areas are now restricted in how many people can come in. There's hand sanitizing, masks, and 6-foot distancing." The new rules mean more lightly attended daily incident briefings and shorter, less social meal times. "There's 6-foot distancing sitting at the meal tables. They can't just sit next to their buddies," Orozco explained. "There's no longer any sitting around and chatting after you're done eating. You have to finish eating and quickly leave so that section can be sanitized for the next person."

When faced with challenges and crises, people in the community come together to help the needy through volunteering or donation.

The crises posed challenges to people who have to deal with animals. When human are threatened in life, it takes great responsibility to also care for the intimate relationship established between us and animals.

While pre-existing discrimination are still prominent, there are also new forms of unfair treatment acted upon the evacuees.

Social Distancing concerns are affecting how people perceive interaction with others. In most cases, it undermines the expected level of communication that we are used to pre-pandemic.

## Conclusion

While it is evident that the sense of community helped those in need to get through the crisis, there are many challenges faced by the evacuees during their interactions with others. Such problems include unfair treatment, social distancing from others and the difficult situation with animal handlings. The positive and negative interactions the evacuees have offset each other and eventually lead to a dull and unpassionate attitude towards an evacuation centre stay.



## Goal of Investigation:

To investigate the evacuees' cognitions in an evacuation center which constitute their attitudes towards evacuation centers.

# Evidence of Issues Cognition

### Sources of Evidence in Australia

For representational purposes only

about regional

#### Tathra Bushfire Evacuation Centre closes a new chapter of generosity

<https://aboutregional.com.au/tathra-bushfire-evacuation-centre-closes-a-new-chapter-of-generosity/>



#### 'It's Like Prison': What Life Looks Like Inside An Evacuation Centre

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/epx8g7/flood-victims-say-life-inside-an-evacuation-centre-is-like-prison>

"People have turned up from Canberra and Sydney with boot loads of groceries ... – **unbelievable**," Lisa says.  
"What a wonderful **community spirit**, we have met so many wonderful people," Denise says.

"It was like prison," said Danny, a Murwillumbah resident, "It was a community-style, 'all walks of life' kind of prison setup with no security."

### Sources of Evidence in Other Places

For representational purposes only

#### CPR News

#### At a Lafayette shelter, anxious Marshall fire evacuees worry and await word on their homes and futures

<https://www.cpr.org/2022/01/01/photos-at-a-lafayette-shelter-anxious-marshall-fire-evacuees-worry-and-await-word-on-their-homes-and-futures/>



Volunteer Priyanka Harish, left, gives Sharon a slice of pizza at the YMCA Arapahoe Center, an evacuation center for those affected by the Marshall fire, in Lafayette, Colorado on Friday, December 31, 2021. Many being served at the evacuation center said **volunteers were extremely helpful, kind and resourceful there.**

#### Desert Sun.

#### For residents fleeing Southern California fires, evacuation centers can be 'jarring' yet 'reassuring'

<https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/2018/11/10/southern-california-fires-red-cross-providing-relief-across-state-1948797002/>

"Walking into it as an evacuation center was something else. **You see evacuation centers on TV, but walking in was jarring.** Thank God we have it, though."

Bryan Lewitt said a local Jewish Day School already burned to the ground, his daughter's summer camp was besieged and his brother's home was very close to being engulfed by flames. **"But it was reassuring to walk into the shelter and see that the Red Cross is really working to provide comfort for people, the shelter is a very somber place, with many elderly and disabled individuals, but they are being provided comfort."**



Evacuees from a wildfire rest on cots and warm themselves under blankets supplied by the Red Cross in the Taft Charter High School gymnasium in the Woodland Hills section of Los Angeles on Friday, Nov. 9, 2018. Portions of Southern California remain under siege as two large brush fires are threatening numerous communities.



Volunteers prepared sandwiches for first responders while others worked in kitchen to make warm meals for evacuees.

#### San Francisco Chronicle

#### Fire evacuees steer clear of shelters, seek isolation during pandemic

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/california-wildfires/article/Fire-evacuees-during-pandemic-steer-clear-of-shelters-15501184.html>

"I'm camping in the Prius!" laughed Cheryl Jarvis, 69, as she rearranged the pillows in her Toyota Prius in the parking lot of the Vacaville Community Center. "It's not real comfortable, but I'm so tired it didn't matter."

Evacuees at the centers are aware of the amount of **help they received from the community** and showed their appreciation too. The **grateful feeling** in people might potentially spur people to be more resilient and **positive** in the evacuation center stay.

While most people had a **pre-existing mental image** of the evacuation centers from **media**, the feeling when one is physically in one can be very different. This shows that the cognitive understanding of a place is easily changeable when one feel it physically.

Some evacuees adopt a more **positive outlook** by seeking an **alternative perspective** in such desperate situations. To **feel reconciled or just simply accept the situation** seems to be the helpful attitude that generally maintain the **mental wellbeing** of the evacuees. However, this approach is unlikely to be found in younger people.

## Conclusion

Most people have **negative beliefs** about an evacuation center, which even being described as "like prison". However, The **human cognition of a place can be overwritten** by their physical presence in a place, events that take place in an environment and the mental resilience one has. While cognition influences human attitude, its **fluctuating nature** allows for **transformative interventions** to reshape human perception.

Interpretation

Analysis

Conclusion



## Goal of Investigation:

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Interpretation

Analysis

Conclusion



# Conclusions

## People to People Interaction

While it is evident that the sense of community helped those in need to get through the crisis, there are many challenges faced by the evacuees during their interactions with others. Such problems include unfair treatments, **social distancing from others** and the difficult situation with animal handlings. The positive and negative interactions the evacuees have offset each other and eventually lead to a dull and unpassionate attitude towards an evacuation center stay.

## People to Environment Interaction

The evacuees lack personal space, food, water resources, and the access to clean water, all these besides chaotic environment then potentially lead to health issues. As such, these undermine the attitude one holds during the maintenance stage of the evacuation center temporary stay.

## Emotion

Most evacuees experience **fear and anxiety because of uncertainty about property safety and future accommodation** during the stay. While this is understandable from a disaster point of view, it affects human reactions and actions irrationally, in terms of evacuation, returning and future-planning decisions and attitude.

## Cognition

Most people have **negative beliefs** on an evacuation center, which even being described as **"like prison"**. However, The human cognition of a place can be overwritten by their physical presence in a place, events that take place in an environment and the mental resilience one has. While cognition influence human attitude, its fluctuating nature allow for transformative interventions to reshape the human perception.

# Areas of Issues

## Increasing Fear and Anxiety

Most evacuees are unsure about their future outlook due to the damage and disturbance caused by the wildfire. Such uncertainty and insecurities lead to their increasing fear and anxiety during the stay in an evacuation center.

## Lack of Social Interaction

Social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic leads to less communication and more isolation among the evacuees in evacuation centers. This potentially leads to mental and emotional distress in the evacuees.

## Negative Impression About the Center

While some of the residents remain optimistic during the stay, most of them hold unfavorable perception of an evacuation center. This is mainly due to the deeply-rooted negative connotation of such places and even exaggerated descriptions such as "prison-like".

# Problem Statement

Residents in an evacuation center often experience **fear and anxiety due to the uncertainty** of their property security and future accommodation. At the same time, the **reduced social interaction** due to social distancing measures also make them suffer. All of these give rise to their **negative impression** of the place, and lead to a **passive attitude** towards the place.

# Potential Solution

## Evacuation Centre as a "Camping Site"

San Francisco Chronicle

**Fire evacuees steer clear of shelters, seek isolation during pandemic**

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/california-wildfires/article/Fire-evacuees-during-pandemic-steer-clear-of-shelters-1591184.php>

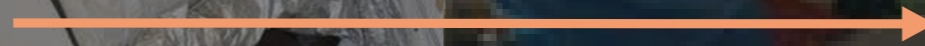
"I'm camping in the Prius!" laughed Cheryl Jarvis, 69, as she rearranged the pillows in her Toyota Prius in the parking lot of the Vacaville Community Center. "It's not real comfortable, but I'm so tired it didn't matter."

### Evacuation Centre

An Undesirable Place

Limited facilities  
Negative emotion  
Passive Attitude

Attitude Towards an Evacuation Center



### Camping Site

An Exciting Place

Limited facilities  
Positive emotion  
Active Attitude

**Similar Conditions, Different Attitudes**

How can we change the evacuees' perception of an evacuation center from an undesirable place to an exciting one, and eventually changing the attitude towards the place from a passive one to an active one ?



# Significance

## Research Purpose

By analyzing the three aspects of attitude - emotion, interaction and cognition, we aim to **investigate the transformative potential of the evacuees' attitude** towards an evacuation center.

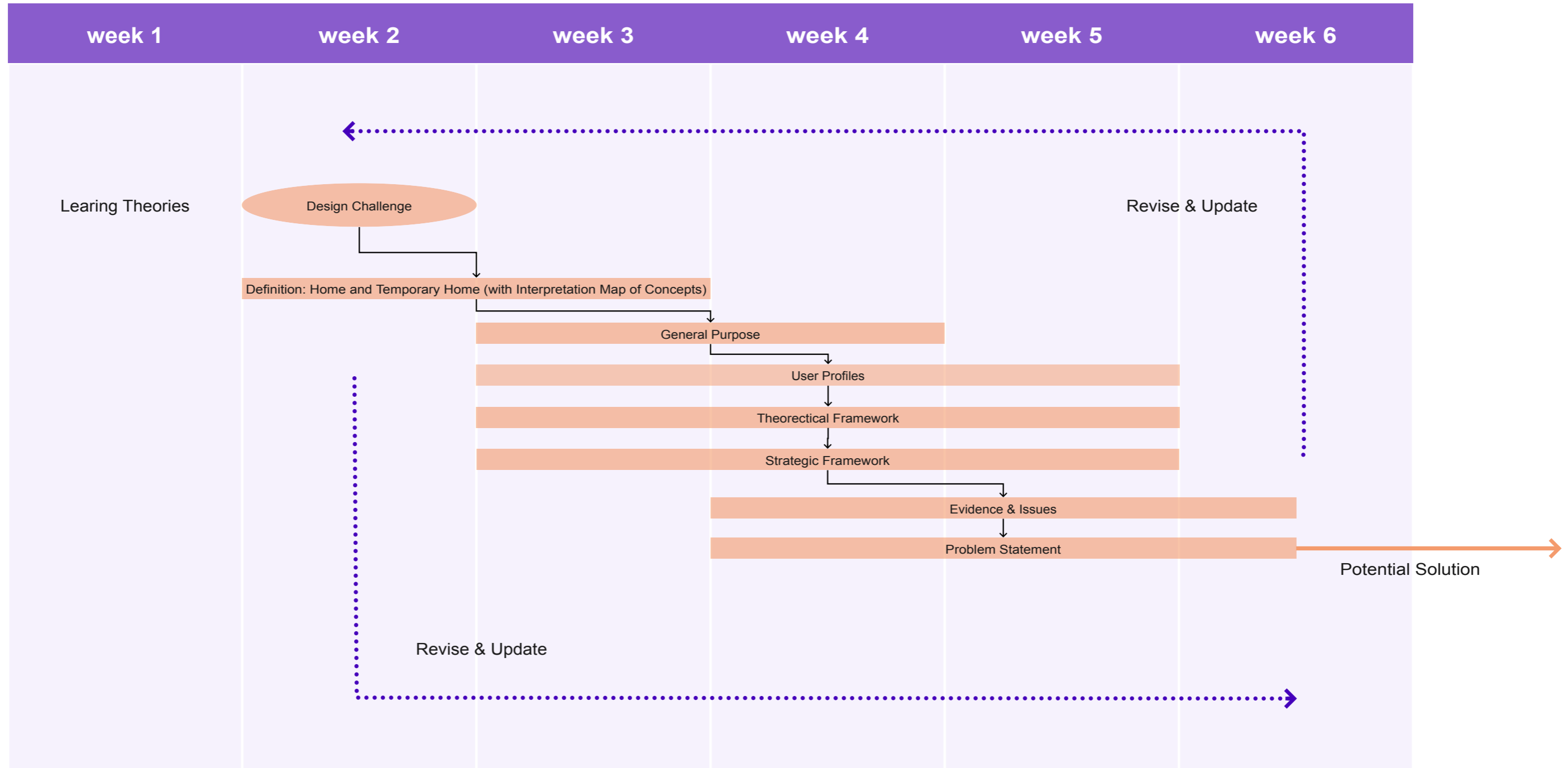
## For Main Users

The outcome of the project should **address the common negative emotions** experienced by the evacuees - such as fear and anxiety. At the same time, the project also strives to **improve the quantity and quality of social interaction** the evacuees have. Eventually, it is hoped that the evacuees' existing **perception of the evacuation center** as a 'prison-like' place could eventually shift to a more **positive one**, with an optimistic outlook on the life after evacuation center.

## In a Larger Context

In a larger context, evacuation centers for different disasters and across different parts of the world are quite similar; and are organized predominantly by the same few NGOs. The project is likely to be **capable of reproduction elsewhere**. With that, we hope that this project can bring insights into how to create a better environment in future evacuation center designs.

# Timeline





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